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A number of factors indicate an increased need for vocational counseling services for adults, chief among them being the economic factors of increased material needs, inflation, and technological change; the social factors of unemployment or underemployment; and the increase of women in the job market. The conventional pattern of testing, profile interpretation, prescription, and placement is not adequate to the task of helping adults reshape their occupational outlook. A philosophy centered on the individual, dynamic self-concept of the client is more contemporary. The place of the counselor within this philosophy is to be versatile, well informed, and flexible in helping clients to shape their goals. These goals must be: (1) immediate in time, (2) clearly defined, (3) intellectually attainable, and (4) contributory to the client's ego satisfaction. (BP)

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THE VOCATIONAL COUNSELING OF ADULTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

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A Philosophy of Adult Counseling

The Increased Need for Adult Counseling

The development of vocational counseling during the past quarter of a century has led to an extensive growth of counseling with youth and young adults: however, there are indications of limited activity and development in the counseling of adults. Schools and colleges have provided the majority of counseling services. But only a few of these centers have offered counseling to adults, and then often in the form of limited services for adults desiring vocational reappraisal. The changing tenor of the times demands that more services be provided for. A number of factors are operating to affect this demand.

Economic Factors

First among the economic factors that cause adults to seek vocational reappraisal is the problem of higher standards of living. A couple no longer starts out with a team, a wagon, and a few tools, with the wife contributing some kitchen utensils and linens. The demands of our society are such that cars, refrigerators, televisions, and other modern conveniences are as necessary as basic furniture. Where the

salary of the husband proves inadequate, he is forced to seek a reevaluation of his basic goals. This makes vocational counseling essential.

Second, the ever increasing problem of inflation of the currency makes the need for increased earning a necessity that calls for an immediate solution often involving further vocational assessment.

Automation has provided a third area that has increased the demand for vocational reevaluation. While it is true that small numbers of persons are added to new categories of jobs as a result of automation, it is even more true that hundreds more are released from jobs because of it. In the last analysis, hundreds of adults, ranging in age from the twenties to the sixties, are forced to seek new work because of the impact of automation. Relocating these individuals in the labor market is frequently dependent upon vocational counseling and reeducation.

The increasing demand for continued education and training also affects the number of adults seeking counseling. Night schools are overflowing with people whose continued work and promotions are dependent upon continued education. Those desiring promotion are particularly seeking vocational counseling to assist them in best utilizing their time in education. As the individual grows older, the careful use of time and finances in further education is imperative, and vocational counseling becomes a valuable aid.

All of the above economic factors impinge upon the lives of individuals, forcing them to seek vocational counseling. The need for increasing opportunities for adult vocational counseling is growing enormously.

Social Factors

Much has been written regarding the school dropout, but it must be mentioned that to rehabilitate these youth, who are

becoming educational casualties in increasing numbers, vocational counseling is mandatory to reduce unemployment and even to make them employable. Too many young people are forced to settle in their initial work for a job for which they are neither trained nor have an adequate interest in.[1] They drift until they become wards of society or are by chance gathered in by some program that will make them employable.

The second social factor influencing the increased need for vocational counseling is the rapidly increasing number of women entering the labor market. Many of these workers are only part-time, and many of them are mothers. Often the main factor causing these women to seek employment is financial. Social demands, the changing role of the mother and father in the family, and the need for additional money to finance education for children are among the main reasons for increased numbers of women entering the labor market. In 1963 two of every five mothers of school-age children were employed outside the home in one way or another.[2] More recent figures indicate that today we have approximately 27,000,000 women in the labor force; it is estimated that by 1980 there will be over 36,000,000. More than one out of every three workers is a woman. Almost three out of five working women are married. To add to this, about half of the women of today are married at the age of twenty and have their last child by the age of thirty. In 1965 the average woman worker was married and forty-one years old.[3]

Since the emancipation of women at the conclusion of

[1] William R. Kelly and R. H. Kelly, *Work Smartly* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), p. 3.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[3] The Women's Bureau, *Fact Sheet on the Changing Patterns of Women's Lives* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 1966).

World War I, more and more women have entered the work force annually. In most instances these women, many of whom are now reentering the work force, are in need of additional training. This is particularly true of mothers who have spent several years at home with their children during the period of infancy. To enable them to reenter the labor market, it is often advisable and sometimes necessary for them to seek vocational guidance that will lead to appropriate retraining.

The Need for an Improved Philosophy of Adult Counseling

During the past twenty-five years a type of almost automated counseling has developed. Testing has become big business. Everything from handwriting analysis to batteries of tests requiring three or more days for administration has been used. In many instances this type of tool approach is too narrowly segmented; often it is the main means of assisting the counselee to arrive at a specific job decision rather than providing evidence of his developing processes.

All too often the counselee is fitted into the counselor's frame of reference rather than the reverse. Admittedly, there is value in testing, but tests are often weak in validity, subject to varied interpretations, and quickly outdated. A shift from the commonly used tools, or at least a shift in the attitude toward the *use* of test results, is needed. Certainly the tool is no more efficient than the individual counselor who utilizes it. A counselor works best with the tools with which he is most familiar and experienced. The counselor needs to take a more longitudinal view of his client and use measurement instruments with discrimination.

One of the counseling advances of the future will lie in counseling for cultural and intellectual advancement. Every indication points to the fact that education which extends beyond the formal school program of what is generally termed "primary education" or "basic education" will continue to increase in the future.[4] Extending beyond this "primary education" is the intellectual world. Many individuals choose to pursue this type of education at their leisure for the sheer joy of knowledge for its own sake. This may be termed *lateral education;* it will be undertaken at the convenience of the individual. But so vast is the field that the student will need counseling to use his time wisely. This will provide the counselor with an excursion outside the realms of his everyday educational and vocational planning for degree-oriented students.

The counselor is a behavioral engineer; as such, he is dealing with an individual who desires change. Wrenn contends that the counselor's responsibility goes beyond the intellectual stages of dealing with ideas and disembodied facts.[5] Obviously the counselee has sought earlier to resolve his difficulties and has not arrived at a solution, or he would not have come to the counselor. The counselor should think of himself as somewhat of a catalyst in a learning situation whose purpose is to aid the client in the learning process. This is a voluntary act. What is perhaps most difficult for the counselor to recognize is that knowledge, skills, values, even self-concepts are constantly changing. Counselors need to learn to accept the fact that the emphasis must be upon man in a constant state of change rather than as a

[4] C. Gilbert Wrenn, *The Counselor in a Changing World* (Washington, D.C.: Am. Personnel & Guidance Assn., 1962), pp. 86–87.
[5] C. Gilbert Wrenn, "Two Psychological Worlds: An Attempted Rapprochement," in J. D. Krumboltz (ed.), *Revolution in Counseling: Implications of Behavioral Science* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), p. 106.

static thing at the time he desires counseling. This demands projective thinking on the part of the counselor. Such an approach can be undertaken ethically if the following statement by Krumboltz can be accepted: "Counseling consists of whatever ethical activities a counselor undertakes in an effort to help the client engage in those types of behavior which will lead to a solution of the client's problem." [6]

Barry and Wolf contend that there are six principles of vocational counseling that are absolutely essential: an holistic approach; the concept of personality as dynamic; the importance of the self-concept; a recognition of individual differences; an understanding of values; and learning as internalization.[7] It is their contention that these principles offer the only possibilities for effective counseling in the future, though it is well to remember that, valuable as these are, there are other principles, too.

A consideration of these six principles individually seems to be mandatory at this point:

1. An holistic approach to personality is one that accepts the individual as an entire unit, not one broken down into patterns of stimulus-response bonds. All responses that are made are in relation to the total background of experience rather than limited to the immediate situation.

2. This gestalt approach to counseling overlaps the second principle of the concept of personality as dynamic. It accepts man as more than a bundle of conditioned responses and presents him as a rational, thinking being capable of cognition, ever changing, growing, and developing throughout his entire lifetime. It makes man subject to change not only from influences from the external environment but also from influences from the internal environment. Were it

[6] J. D. Krumboltz, "Behavior Counseling: Rationale and Research," *American Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 44 (1965), p. 384.

[7] Ruth Barry and Beverly Wolf, *An Epitaph for Vocational Guidance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 199.

not for this second factor, man's life would be subject to change only on the basis of instrumental conditioning. But often these internal factors, this holistic and dynamic approach, these cognitive reexperiencings of the situation provide new perceptions. This reevaluation of experience causes a constant and dynamic change in the individual. Thus the counselor must accept his client as an individual in the process of development rather than as one in a static position.

3. Part of this acceptance on the part of the counselor is the acceptance of the integrity of the client's self-concept. It is not a misstatement to say that many counselors have one view of the counselee while the counselee holds an entirely different picture of himself.

Often the discrepancy occurs because the counselor reviews a battery of tests that pose a particular presentation of the personality of the counselee. They have little or no regard for what the individual thinks of himself. An approach to an understanding of how the client sees himself can be determined by the counselor only through personal interview and an attempt to assess carefully the dynamics of the client's self-concept.

Several years ago a counselee called upon the author and related that a severe emotional problem had developed concerning his work situation. The client had been selling investments for two years, but by his own statement he found it impossible to continue, largely because of his dislike for the work. When asked about his success, he commented that he had earned more than $10,000 the preceding year, but that during the current year his work was so bad that he would gross less than $7,500. He said that his attitude toward his work had become such that he hated to get out of bed in the morning, had pains in the stomach, headaches, and a variety of other psychosomatic symptoms.

All objective test results indicated that the counselee was a person who might well be able to succeed in selling investments and securities. Then, on close examination through personal discussion and interview, it was learned that previously he had held a position of considerable trust and administrative responsibility, which he had carried well. This position had had a certain amount of prestige. People had come to him for suggestions, advice, and administrative guidance. In short, he was behind the desk.

In his present work as an investment counselor, he found himself cooling his heels in the outer office, waiting interminably, and often not well-received. Almost every aspect of his present situation violated his self-concept. He could not see himself anywhere other than behind the desk.

It is often difficult for the counselor to obtain an adequate picture of the self-concept of his counselee, which is not presented by objective tests. The counselor must be acutely aware of this very important aspect of personality and its value in the counseling procedure. The counselee's final determination of a vocational objective is sometimes dependent upon his acceptance of a goal in terms of its relation to his present self-concept.

4. The mushrooming use of objective test batteries has brought clearly into focus the emphasis on individual differences. Counselors have measured and remeasured many aspects of human behavior in an endeavor to seek out the unique and pertinent facts that could be of assistance in the selection of a vocational objective. This is as it should be. Unfortunately, some areas are still lacking in suitable measurement techniques. Creative ability, judgment, and, to a certain extent, some of the value judgment areas, such as integrity, loyalty, and honesty, are still not accurately measurable.

The encroachment of the polygraph examination into the

area of personnel selection in business and industry attests to the fact that value judgments are still being sought and that counselors are without adequate measurement techniques. However, the counselor is responsible for recognizing and assessing as thoroughly as possible the unique individual characteristics, both strengths and weaknesses, which his client possesses. Without these it would be impossible to assist the client in making a reliable decision regarding an adequate vocational choice.

5. Often the values of the client are in conflict with those of the counselor; yet a recognition of client values is primary. The value judgments of the counselor will depend not only upon his philosophy of counseling, but upon his philosophy of life. His purpose and function are to aid the client in establishing new goals, and often these new goals may be dependent upon the counselor's ability to assist in the client's consideration of new value judgments.

6. The above is often done through the use of the last principle, learning by internalization. Internalization implies that sensations and observations become internalized as values and standards through true perception, with perception defined as "understanding." The individual functions on the basis of his understanding of the outside world and his organization of this understanding. The task of the counselor is to provide the client with a new way of understanding his environment and to enable him to react to it in a different manner. Through perceptual reorganization the client is better able to operate in his environment. This reorganization (*cognition*, if you will) provides new and better understanding of the environmental situation. This is particularly true of value judgments, which are the most difficult to change since they are often markedly emotionally toned.

Internalized learning must of necessity bring a change in

the dynamics of the personality. The dynamic nature of personality is dependent upon change, and change is often dependent upon a shift in the value judgments. The counselor must be able to assist the client to develop a cognitive reexperiencing of his situation. This will enable him to utilize new values and redetermine his goals and his actions in light of his new understanding of his environment. In a sense, this is the entire objective and process of vocational counseling.

Most important in the area of adult counseling is the counselor's versatility and flexibility. (A junior college counselor, for example, may have counselees ranging in age from sixteen to over sixty-five.) In education, the counselor must expect a variation from school dropouts to doctors of philosophy, and in experience he must expect a range from farm laborers to retired generals, admirals, and college presidents. Only on the basis of sound philosophic principles of guidance can the counselor expect to function adequately.

The Determination of Goals

Goals Must Be Immediate in Time

The counselor is responsible for insuring that the client's goal is not too remote in time. Many times the client has set a goal for himself, which, because of the length of training, is unsuitable. The American people have ever been prone to believe that it is never too late for anything. However, unless the urge to acquire a professional degree is purely academic, the matter of the goal's immediacy is important if the degree is expected to provide monetary rewards.

The goal of a professional degree in engineering desired by a man of forty-seven may not be realistic from a financial point of view. Management has great skepticism regarding

persons entering an occupational field after the age of forty. The reasoning is that the ability to learn new material has slowed down, the individual has acquired a rigidity that may make supervision difficult, and, even though the student may have done well academically, he has thrown away the best years of his life. In addition, pension plan requirements and costs may be prohibitive to the employment of older entry candidates. This hesitancy on the part of management is very real and seriously limits the decision to make a major vocational shift in later life.

A woman of twenty-six, married and supported by a husband, may successfully undertake an educational training program of five years in preparation for a vocational objective. The same program would be prohibitive for a forty-five-year-old widow who must provide her own livelihood at the termination of training.

It is imperative that the counselor assist the counselee to examine carefully the timeliness of his objective. When age is a limiting factor, the goals must of necessity be immediate in time.

Goals Must Be Clearly Defined

For the mature adult the goal must be specific. This is very necessary to him because the older person must crystallize his thinking to avoid loss of time and money if additional training is necessary. Not only the job title but the job description should be clearly delineated in the mind of the client. He must know the stresses and strains that the work will demand, as well as the rewards.

The young man seeking to become a business executive has been told of the rewards since his high school days. His vague undifferentiated objective is to become a "big-time" executive. Often he has no idea of the competition he will meet along the way, the long hard hours of overtime, the

fact that his wife and family will often be widow and orphans because of his dedication to duty. He is frequently unaware of the social demands that will be placed upon him so that he may be seriously in debt before he achieves anything close to becoming a top-level executive. He has no realization of the enemies he will make among those who are not selected to become administrators; he has no true picture of the loneliness of his position if he does reach the top and the fact that every younger person who works under him will be seeking to unseat him. A thorough knowledge of the hazards of the occupational choice are just as important as a knowledge of the rewards.

Goals Must Be Financially Expedient

Careful planning for the adequate financing of training is a most important factor in the successful achievement of advanced goals for the adult. Most occupational changes desired by adults are an upgrading, which requires retraining. In many instances this training cannot be accomplished in evening college. Thus the financial planning for the family during the training period becomes a major action which the family must not only be aware of, but agree to participate in. Fortunately, there are many programs of government-subsidized training and many sources of loans for training.

Goals Must Be Intellectually Attainable

The personnel manager of a large manufacturing corporation asked the following question: "Isn't there a time when a person should recognize his limitations and learn to live with them? Most of my trouble comes from the dissatisfaction of good technicians who want to seek professional status but are unable to attain it."

On the campus of every large university will be found the perennial student — the individual who, despite all sign-

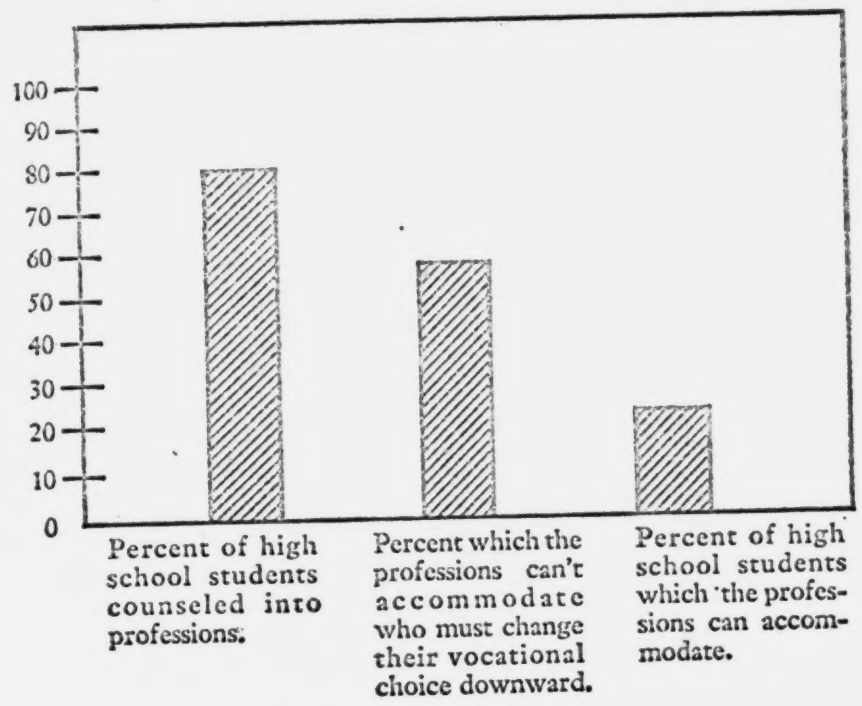

FIGURE I

Problematical number of high school students who must change their occupational choice because of inadequate counseling into the professional areas.*

posts, returns year after year to work on a degree beyond his powers of attainment. But business has no time for these individuals. Production is required, or management makes a replacement.

When the individual desires to make a vocational change it is toward an ideal that relates to his self-concept. In many instances his goal is what he wants to be rather than what he is capable of being. It is natural to tend to see ourselves in heroic proportion, and the counselor must guard against this "Pollyanna" or "self-halo" effect in his client. In some instances, however, the reverse is desirable, since the client

* Henry Weits, "Guidance as Behavioral Change," *American Personnel and Guidance Journal* (March, 1961), pp. 558–559.

must be encouraged to accept a mental challenge equal to his ability. The client must accept reality in the level of his vocational selection. This does not mean that he is necessarily required to forego an entire vocational area in his choice, but to relocate his goal at a suitable level. The final goal must be in definite relationship to the intellectual ability of the client.

Goals Must Contribute to the Ego Satisfaction of the Client

The client arrives at the counselor's office with a mental image of an ideal goal in relation to his self-concept. If he must settle for anything less, the major problem of the counselor is to assure the client that this goal is one that will satisfy his personality needs. Many occupational changes are made solely on the basis that the individual derives no ego satisfaction from his work.

The rate of attrition in engineering students at Phoenix College (a two-year community college in a metropolitan area) may serve as an example. Annually more than 100 students undertake the program of professional engineering. At the end of the two-year program only 10 percent will go on to advanced work. The remaining 90 percent must be carefully guided into something else which provides suitable ego satisfaction. Some will become good machinists and mechanics, others will become draftsmen, and still others will enter some form of business administration program.

A more striking example is that of the young optometrist who lived in a neighborhood with three insurance salesmen, all of whom surpassed him financially. His dissatisfaction was apparent when he entered the office. He recognized that he could not gain the financial rewards his friends had, and that he had become increasingly morose over his situation. Age and marital situation made complete retraining

inadvisable. The counselor stressed his service to humanity and the status of professional proficiency, and suggested advanced graduate work to increase his opportunities. His self-concept had been reestablished.

In every instance where the ideal goal and the possibility of achievement are widely separated, the counselor must make a great effort to assure that the selected goal provides adequate ego satisfaction to maintain sufficient motivation on the job.

Ego status is closely related to the self-concept. Much of ego satisfaction may depend on how well the individual is able to develop the status of his position to conform with his self-concept. In the next chapter, the entire concept of ego status in relationship to satisfaction will be carefully examined.

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